

**YACWAG  
LITTLEWOOD  
BREEDING BIRD  
SURVEY  
ST438683  
Spring 2023**



**Blackcap**



**Charity No. 1076362**

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## Comments

This is YACWAG's twentieth annual survey of breeding birds in Littlewood.

Littlewood is a linear five acre strip of woodland on Kenn Moor SSSI. It is shown as 'Plantation' on maps dating from 1821 but some of the veteran Alders are thought to pre-date its creation. It now has the characteristics of a natural wood with Oak, Ash, Sycamore, Willow, Blackthorn, Guelder Rose, Holly and Alder Buckthorn as well as a thriving understorey. The glades contain plants that are a rare remnant of the natural vegetation of a peat moor.

For birds and mammals the wood provides a place of welcome shelter in the middle of the exposed and open moor. The Alder trees produce a large crop of seeds in the winter and this food source is exploited by large flocks of Goldfinches and, in some years, Siskins and Lesser Redpolls, although these have often been absent in recent years, perhaps partly due to climate change. In spring the Willow blossoms attract a multitude of insects which feed hundreds of nestlings including many Blue Tits and Great Tits which use the nest boxes and bat boxes.

The wood was acquired by YACWAG in 2003 and spring bird surveys commenced the following year, so this report is the twentieth. For survey purposes the wood was divided into eight sections (see site map) and birds were mapped using a system based on the original British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) Common Bird Census scheme. The BTO have now moved away from that type of recording to a tabular system suitable to digital analysis, so we have moved to the new system. Now the wood is divided into three equal parts. Section A (formerly 1-4), Section B (5-6) and Section C (7-8). The survey visits are all timed to take one hour evenly spaced over the length of the wood.

It was a slightly above average year for the nesting passerines as shown by the graph on page 9 and as usual there was plenty of song from Chiffchaffs and Blackcaps in particular during the survey walks. (Corvids and Pigeons can occur in flocks which distort the data and are therefore excluded). The season started with Rooks setting up nests at the southern end of the wood but this rookery was soon abandoned, perhaps because of Ravens which arrived and for the first time nested successfully in the north section. I believe that the Rooks moved to the nearby Decoypool Wood.

There was no evidence that Tawny Owls or Sparrowhawks nested this year but Tawny Owls may well have done so, they are difficult to detect, A pair of Sparrowhawks were recorded on the first visit but not subsequently and the Raven's presence may have persuaded them to move.

Great Spotted Woodpeckers were definitely absent and it will be interesting to see if they return next year. A pair nested close to the Kenn Moor Reserve near to housing and garden feeders may be coming ever more attractive to them. As usual there was no breeding evidence for the Treecreepers but as they continue to be present and they are very sedentary it is very likely that they do nest.

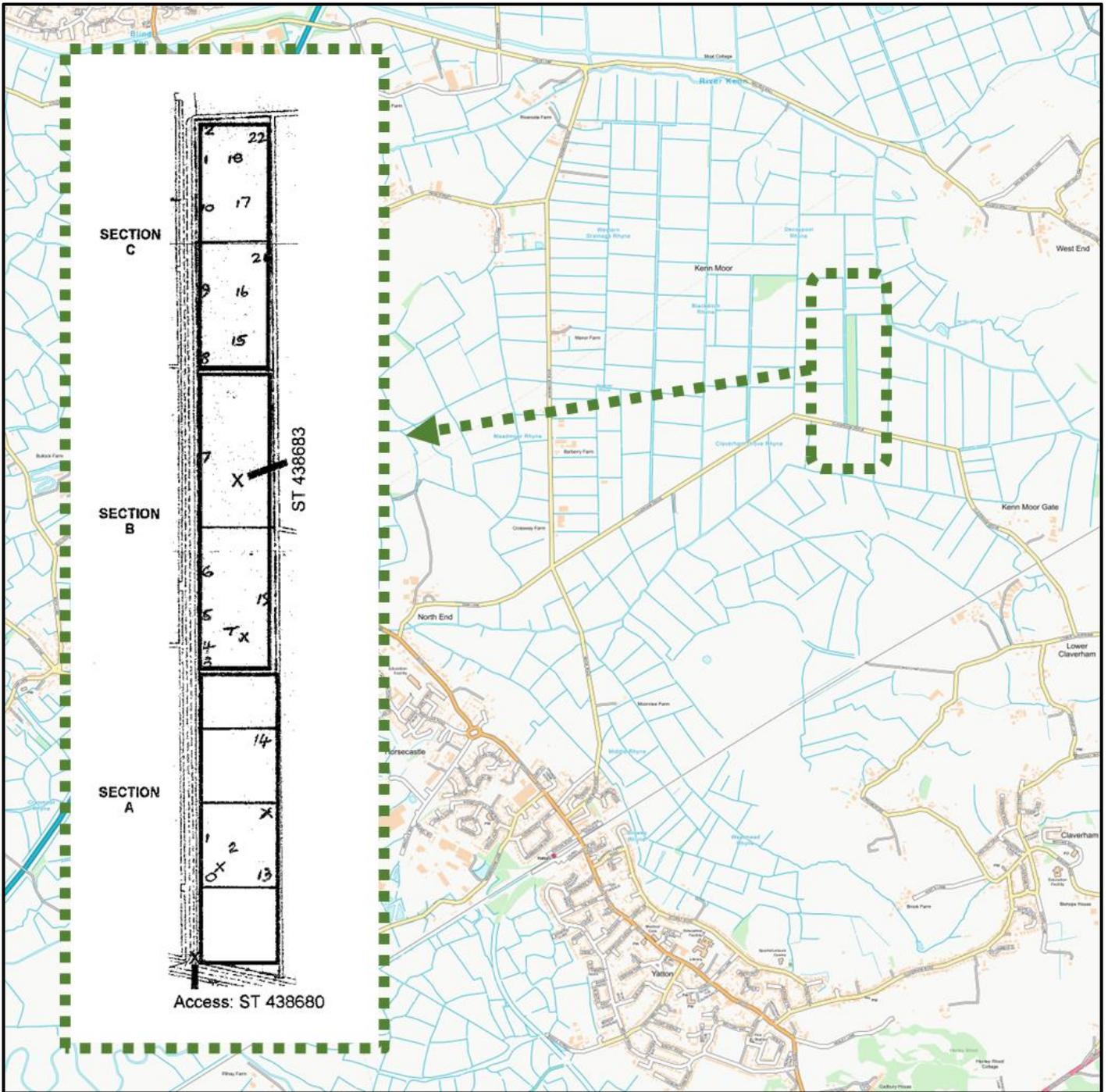
## Acknowledgements

Thanks to volunteer warden John Croxton, Bob Evans and Viv French for their involvement in the surveys.

The survey forms and this report were designed and produced by Jon Thobroe and I warmly thank him for his time and expertise.

Trevor Riddle July 2023.

# Littlewood Site Map



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## 1<sup>st</sup> Survey - 8<sup>th</sup> April

**Date:** 08/04/2023      **Weather:** Sunny, light N wind  
**Start time:** 08:30  
**End time:** 09:33      **Observers:** Trevor Riddle, John Croxton, Bob Evans

SECTION		A		B		C		TOTALS	
LIST		Total	Sing	Total	Sing	Total	Sing	Total	Sing
WP	Woodpigeon			3				3	
SH	Sparrowhawk			2				2	
C.	Carrion Crow			2				2	
BT	Blue Tit	1		2		3		6	
GT	Great Tit	4	3	2		1		7	3
CC	Chiffchaff	3	3	4	2	2	1	9	6
BC	Blackcap	1	1	2	2	1	1	4	4
WR	Wren	4	4			2	2	6	6
B	Blackbird	2	1	1		1		4	1
R	Robin	1	1	1	1	2	2	4	4
D	Dunnock					1	1	1	1
GO	Goldfinch	1	1					1	1
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>26</b>

**Notes:** 6 Rook nests - section A  
Green Woodpecker calling - off section A

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Survey - 26<sup>th</sup> April

**Date:** 26/04/2023      **Weather:** Overcast, light E wind  
**Start time:** 08:30  
**End time:** 09:30      **Observers:** Trevor Riddle, John Croxton, Bob Evans

SECTION		A		B		C		TOTALS	
LIST		Total	Sing	Total	Sing	Total	Sing	Total	Sing
WP	Woodpigeon	1		1	1			2	1
J.	Jay			1				1	
RN	Raven					1		1	
BT	Blue Tit	3		2		2	1	7	1
GT	Great Tit	2	2	2	2			4	4
CC	Chiffchaff	2	1	3	2	2	2	7	5
BC	Blackcap	2	2	2	2	3	3	7	7
WR	Wren	5	5	1	1	4	3	10	9
B	Blackbird			2				2	
R	Robin	1		2	2	2	2	5	4
D	Dunnock					1	1	1	1
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>32</b>

**Notes:** Reed Warbler singing by section A in Eastern Drove  
Rookery in section A appears abandoned  
Raven nesting section C

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Survey - 10th May

**Date:** 10/05/2023      **Weather:** Cloudy, light W wind  
**Start time:** 08:30  
**End time:** 09:30      **Observers:** John Croxton, Bob Evans, Viv French

SECTION		A		B		C		TOTALS	
LIST		Total	Sing	Total	Sing	Total	Sing	Total	Sing
WP	Woodpigeon			2	1	1		3	1
RO	Rook			7		2		9	
RN	Raven					2		2	
BT	Blue Tit	2	1	1	1	2	2	5	4
GT	Great Tit	2	1	1	1	1	1	4	3
LT	Long Tailed Tit					2	2	2	2
CC	Chiffchaff	4	4	4	4			8	8
RW	Reed Warbler					1	1	1	1
BC	Blackcap	4	4	3	3	2	2	9	9
WR	Wren	4	4	4	4			8	8
TC	Treecreeper					1		1	
B	Blackbird	6	3	2	2	3	3	11	8
ST	Song Thrush			1	1			1	1
R	Robin					2	2	2	2
CH	Chaffinch	3	2					3	2
GO	Goldfinch			1	1			1	1
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>50</b>

### 4<sup>th</sup> Survey - 27th May

**Date:** 27/05/2023      **Weather:** Sunny, light N E wind  
**Start time:** 08:30  
**End time:** 09:30      **Observers:** Trevor Riddle, John Croxton, Bob Evans

SECTION		A		B		C		TOTALS	
LIST		Total	Sing	Total	Sing	Total	Sing	Total	Sing
WP	Woodpigeon	1		1				2	
BT	Blue Tit	1		3		3		7	
GT	Great Tit					1		1	
CC	Chiffchaff	5	3	1	1	3	1	9	5
RW	Reed Warbler	1	1					1	1
BC	Blackcap	3	3	2	2	1	1	6	6
WR	Wren	4	4	3	3	1	1	8	8
B	Blackbird	3	1	1		1		5	1
R	Robin			1		1	1	2	1
D	Dunnock					1	1	1	1
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>23</b>

**Notes:** Reed Warbler singing by section A.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Survey - 12th June

**Date:** 12/06/2023      **Weather:** Bright, warm, light N E wind  
**Start time:** 08:30  
**End time:** 09:30      **Observers:** Trevor Riddle, John Croxton, Bob Evans

SECTION		A		B		C		TOTALS	
LIST		Total	Sing	Total	Sing	Total	Sing	Total	Sing
WP	Woodpigeon	1	1	1	1			2	2
C.	Carrion Crow			6				6	
RN	Raven	2						2	
BT	Blue Tit					1		1	
CC	Chiffchaff	1	1	3	3	3	2	7	6
RW	Reed Warbler	1	1					1	1
BC	Blackcap	3	3	2	2	1	1	6	6
WR	Wren	4	4	2	2	5	5	11	11
B	Blackbird	2	2	4	1			6	3
R	Robin	3	3	2	2			5	5
CH	Chaffinch			2	2			2	2
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>36</b>

**Notes:** Reed Warbler singing in Eastern Drove by section A.

## Number of Birds Recorded by Date

DATE		08 April		26 April		10 May		27 May		12 June		Total	
LIST		Total	Sing	Total	Sing								
WP	Woodpigeon	3		2	1	3	1	2		2	2	12	4
SH	Sparrowhawk	2										2	
J.	Jay			1								1	
RO	Rook					9						9	
C.	Carrion Crow	2								6		8	
RN	Raven			1		2				2		5	
BT	Blue Tit	6		7	1	5	4	7		1		26	5
GT	Great Tit	7	3	4	4	4	3	1				16	10
LT	Long Tailed Tit					2	2					2	2
CC	Chiffchaff	9	6	7	5	8	8	9	5	7	6	40	30
RW	Reed Warbler					1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3
BC	Blackcap	4	4	7	7	9	9	6	6	6	6	32	32
WR	Wren	6	6	10	9	8	8	8	8	11	11	43	42
TC	Treecreeper					1						1	
B	Blackbird	4	1	2		11	8	5	1	6	3	28	13
ST	Song Thrush					1	1					1	1
R	Robin	4	4	5	4	2	2	2	1	5	5	18	16
D	Dunnock	1	1	1	1			1	1			3	3
CH	Chaffinch					3	2			2	2	5	4
GO	Goldfinch	1	1			1	1					2	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>49</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>167</b>

## Number of Birds Recorded by Section

SECTION/DATE	08 April	26 April	10 May	27 May	12 June	Total
A	17	16	25	18	17	93
B	19	16	26	12	22	95
C	13	15	19	12	10	69
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>257</b>

## Number of Passerines and Non-Passerines Recorded

ORDER/DATE	08 April	26 April	10 May	27 May	12 June	Total
Passerine	42	43	56	40	39	220
Non-passerine	7	4	14	2	10	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>257</b>

## Number of Passerines Recorded by Date

DATE		08 April		26 April		10 May		27 May		12 June		Total	
		Total	Sing	Total	Sing								
BT	Blue Tit	6		7	1	5	4	7		1		26	5
GT	Great Tit	7	3	4	4	4	3	1				16	10
LT	Long Tailed Tit					2	2					2	2
CC	Chiffchaff	9	6	7	5	8	8	9	5	7	6	40	30
RW	Reed Warbler					1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3
BC	Blackcap	4	4	7	7	9	9	6	6	6	6	32	32
WR	Wren	6	6	10	9	8	8	8	8	11	11	43	42
TC	Treecreeper					1						1	
B	Blackbird	4	1	2		11	8	5	1	6	3	28	13
ST	Song Thrush					1	1					1	1
R	Robin	4	4	5	4	2	2	2	1	5	5	18	16
D	Dunnock	1	1	1	1			1	1			3	3
CH	Chaffinch					3	2			2	2	5	4
GO	Goldfinch	1	1			1	1					2	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>163</b>

## Breeding Passerine Index

The table and graph provide an indication of the populations of breeding small passerines. (Small passerines include small field, hedgerow and reedbed birds but exclude, for example, pigeons, corvids and ducks.)

Non-breeding birds such as juveniles and birds that are unlikely to be breeding are excluded from the counts.

YEAR	COUNT	NOTE
2019	263	
2020	180	Extrapolated from three visits
2021	229	
2022	200	
2023	220	

